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Readers of Theological Thought.

Bishop Gore.

BY THE REV. J. K. MOZLEY, D.D., READING.

It is an interesting if not very profitable pursuit to look back to a past age and compare its outstanding personalities in this or that walk of life with those of the present generation. Was there a race of giants then, which has since vanished from the earth? Or is the *laudator temporis acti* as unreliable in his estimate of persons as in his comparisons at other points? Perhaps it is inevitable that the shadows of the departed should grow greater as they recede from us in time, and that near acquaintance, especially in days when popular journalism can make that acquaintance so very near, should not tend to exalt the stature of the living.

Anyhow, we ask our questions and make our comparisons. We scrutinize artists and poets and lawyers and politicians—and, not least, Churchmen and theologians. Was there, in the Victorian Age, or in the early years of this century, an achieved greatness in Biblical scholarship, in dogmatics, in preaching, in ecclesiastical statemanship, greater than anything which we can produce? Did the Cambridge triumvirate, Lightfoot, Hort, and Westcott, take their mantles with them when they passed? Are our theologians mere *epigoni* when set beside Frederick Denison Maurice and Aubrey Moore and Fairbairn? Are there none to carry on the succession of such preachers as F. W. Robertson, Liddon, and Spurgeon? In the gifts which they brought to the guidance of ecclesiastical policy, did Samuel Wilberforce and Robert Rainy and Hugh Price Hughes stand on an eminence since left lonely, with the one exception of him who has so lately laid down the office of Archbishop of Canterbury?

It is, partly at least, the gap between the ages and the conditions of those ages which makes comparison difficult. Georgians may or may not be inferior to Victorians: very different they must be. Yet here and there a bridge may be found, the bridge of a living personality. Such a bridge, the most significant and the strongest in the country of the theologians, is Bishop Charles Gore.

It is a far cry back to the year 1882. That is the earliest date of any work which, in the catalogue of the British Museum, appears in the course of the eleven or twelve pages devoted to the literary labours of Dr. Gore. Since then he has written and written. There are some seventy books,

pamphlets, sermons, addresses, miscellaneous productions, and contributions to composite volumes which have him as their author, not to mention prefaces and introductions that he has supplied, and editorial work he has undertaken. And there is more to come: that, at least, is our good and substantial hope. For his eye is not dim, nor is his natural force abated, and next year he is due to begin his course of Gifford Lectures.

There are circumstances which make the merely quantitative side of his theological work remarkable and even astonishing. For Dr. Gore's life has not been that of the scholar in his study. He has held academic and theological posts: at Trinity College, Oxford, at Cuddesdon as Vice-Principal, at the Pusey House as Librarian and Principal. But University life and the concerns of a theological College do not provide those wide spaces for research and for writing which might be, and probably are, imagined. May I say, without presumption, *Experto crede*? And from 1894 to 1919 Dr. Gore was a public figure, first as Canon of Westminster, where the deep impression which his sermons made must have meant continued and increasing calls upon his time, then as Bishop successively of Worcester, of Birmingham, and of Oxford. And Birmingham, of which he was the first Bishop, meant all the labour of superintending and nourishing the life of a new diocese. Moreover, in 1892 he had founded the Community of the Resurrection. Its home was first at the Pusey House, then at Radley, where Dr. Gore went as vicar in 1893, though only for a year. It was in 1898 that the Community came to a settled abode at Mirfield. Dr. Gore's connexion with it has never ceased, and every year he goes to the meeting of the Chapter in July. This was a new charge upon time and thought. And we must not forget those social interests and activities which have been inspired by, and have drawn out, his prophetic gift, and have opened the door to a wide influence which he never could have attained simply in virtue of his theological and ecclesiastical writings. He and Scott Holland were Westcott's foremost disciples and followers in the days of the old Christian Social Union. He was one of the strongest supporters of that great journalist Mr. Lathbury, in his heroic attempt, which failed,

but failed so nobly, to combine in the *Pilot* the principles of strong Churchmanship and political and social progress, and to find a constituency of readers large enough to ensure the paper's success. It is this union of the man of thought and the man of action, of the theologian and the administrator, the Bishop and the social reformer, which is so striking. It is not that these pursuits and duties are necessarily incompatible with one another—but few men have the inclination or the energy or the patience to find the possibility of keen attention to different calls and claims.

Here, then, we have a man who has done much. What of the man himself? For no one can achieve so much without a personality, without gifts of mind and character, of more than ordinary weight. This is not a character sketch, and the attempt at the analysis, sometimes at the dissection, of living people is often carried to the furthest limits compatible with any decent respect for their individualities. But this may be said: knowledge gained through much patient study, and scholarship of the type we associate rather with the great Anglican divines of past generations than with the modern German *gelehrte*, are associated with an outlook characterized not by subtlety or imaginative genius but by singular directness and independence. Making no claim to be a polymath, he yet reserves the rights of his own judgment in a manner and degree not too common. On the whole, scholarship, not least theological scholarship, tends to departmentalize itself. A man is an expert in Old Testament, or in Church History, or in Philosophy of Religion; within the limits of his expert knowledge he is thoroughly competent and formidable. But where he knows he is not an authority there he is inclined to be silent altogether, to distrust his judgment because of the short circuit of his knowledge. This has its good side, morally in humility, intellectually in the abstention from foolish speculation. Nevertheless, it is not an unmixed blessing; it may mean at times something like a failure of moral courage; and experts are not always wise.

One never feels of Bishop Gore that he puts his judgment into the keeping of any expert. I do not mean that he never depends too much on the conclusions of others. It is certainly arguable that in the somewhat exclusive emphasis he lays upon the Prophets of Israel in connexion with monotheism he was unduly influenced by the late Dr. H. F. Hamilton's work, *The People of God*. But that is not to say that in this connexion or in any other Bishop Gore has failed to pass the con-

ceptions of others through the sieve of his own thought. Some one has spoken of a long-standing quarrel or contention which Bishop Gore has had with the philosophers. What I take to be the broad truth in this matter is not that he claims to enter the metaphysical field as a challenger in purely philosophical debates. There is nothing in his case parallel to what may be regarded as the unfortunate experiences of Dr. Sanday, when that eminent New Testament scholar involved himself in speculations about the subconscious. But Bishop Gore maintains that the philosophers are wrong in neglecting as much as they do Christian theology, and such leading ideas in that theology as revelation and incarnation. And what he would like to see is a Christian philosophy built up to-day in the light of modern knowledge, on the basis of Christian postulates. The important 'Essay on the Relations of Religion, Theology, and Philosophy' in the volume *Can we then Believe?* gives his mind very fully on this subject. It combines friendliness to philosophy with that spirit of judicial independence which befits the Christian theologian.

It is this independence of mind which is the secret of what some observers find difficult to understand in Dr. Gore—the union of elements broadly describable as conservative and liberal. Having satisfied himself of the truth of the Catholic tradition in respect of creeds, ministry, and sacraments, Dr. Gore has held unswervingly to positions which seem to him involved in that tradition, and has consistently opposed whatever would be, in his judgment, equivalent to the stultifying of his acceptance of that tradition. He takes the responsibility, which he has urged that we all ought to take, of making up his mind and saying 'Yes,' and, therefore, also 'No.' But with this adherence to the Catholic tradition has been associated an acceptance of the critical method and attitude with respect to the Bible, an interpretation of the limitations involved in our Lord's manhood which is certainly not that adopted in patristic or classical Anglican theology, and a cautious yet definite movement away from the doctrine of eternal punishment. In these respects it has appeared to Dr. Gore necessary to recognize that theology has been too confidently deductive.

What is true of Dr. Gore theologically is also, and naturally, true of him ecclesiastically. It is not that he has the cross-bench mind. He is not in the least like the typical 'moderate,' who is often a little bit of everything with no very central convictions. But Dr. Gore is not that other type,

'the good party man.' That person is always in danger of believing in the party and the cause because it is the party and the cause. And because the advantage of the party constantly seems bound up with an effort to occupy and retain some new and further-on position, the party man tends to be an extremist. From such an attitude Dr. Gore is far removed. He has little of that trustful and often one-eyed optimism which is an almost essential attribute of the good party man. He is, and, I imagine, always has been since he consciously adopted a position, an Anglo-Catholic. But if all Anglo-Catholics were like Dr. Gore, or took him as their leader, there would be a very different story to tell of the recent history of religion in England. It is at least possible that the Prayer Book of 1927—to use that rough-and-ready if inexact title—would be by now as much part of the law of the land as the Prayer Book of 1662. If one wants to be quite accurate, one must allow that neither the older-fashioned title Tractarian nor the new term Anglo-Catholic in its modern connotation quite fits Dr. Gore. I say 'new term,' because as the usual and definitive description of a party it is quite modern. It is only since the War that Anglo-Catholic Congresses have been held. With certain developments, especially in connexion with extra-liturgical eucharistic devotions, Dr. Gore is not in sympathy. And any tendency towards the development of a system that would appear as simply Roman Catholicism without the Pope can look for no support from him.

In point of fact, Dr. Gore is no very enthusiastic admirer of any of the institutional embodiments of Christian truth and the Christian spirit as he sees them at work in the world to-day. A convinced Churchman for whom any essential contrast between institutional religion and the religion of the Spirit is unthinkable, he is the last man to feel satisfied with the institutions. His judgment upon Anglicanism can be extraordinarily severe. It is safe to say that no English Free Churchman would have committed himself to the sentence which I take from Dr. Gore's last published address—his sermon entitled *Dangers and Duties*, preached, be it noted, as one of the opening sermons of the recent Cheltenham Church Congress. It is a sentence which expresses no momentary pessimism, but a conviction long and deeply rooted: 'When I reflect upon the history of the Church of England—upon its long-continued and almost unparalleled worldliness; upon its Erastian betrayal of its own spiritual liberties; upon its long-continued ac-

quiescence in the intolerable wrongs of the poor and helpless; upon its abiding preference of policy to principle,—I cannot but expect divine judgment, which may be as devastating as that which fell upon the ancient Church of Africa, though wholly different in character.' We are, indeed, a long way removed from the spirit of Dean Church's *credo* as to the Church of England—'with all its faults the most glorious Church in Christendom.'

Had Dr. Gore not been a Christian he might have been as radical a pessimist as Thomas Hardy; and many may hold that he sometimes gives the impression of unduly overlooking or underrating the brighter side of things. But if we use the word pessimism as at all descriptive of his outlook we must remember that it is never that of the Manichæan or fatalist, but always that of the prophet and moral reformer. For Dr. Gore is the Christian prophet and moral teacher with, in his own characteristic phrase, 'a permanently troubled conscience.' It is this which, more than anything else, has enabled him to work with Christians and non-Christians from whom, in theology and ecclesiastical attachments, he has been widely separated. There is in him the hard grain of the soul which demands justice: he lays the stress less exclusively on love than do some modern teachers. In all this, and, indeed, in other respects, he reminds me a good deal of the late Dr. Forsyth.

A study of Dr. Gore's theological work would call for far more space than a single article can appropriate. Yet something must be said of his labours in several branches of theological learning.

First, then, we must note his Biblical studies. The Commentaries on Romans, on Ephesians, and on the Epistles of St. John are not framed on the lines of the classic works of Lightfoot; nor are they comparable in massiveness and minuteness with great German commentaries of to-day. But in lucidity, directness, and moral application they have a place of their own. Along with these we shall class the Commentary on the Sermon on the Mount, and the contributions which he has made to the new one-volume Commentary on Holy Scripture issued by the S.P.C.K., of which he has been the General Editor. In it he has written on 'The Bible in the Church,' on 'The Teaching of our Lord Jesus Christ,' and on 'The Virgin Birth of our Lord,' and has commented on St. Luke's Gospel. In all Dr. Gore's New Testament work there is combined a belief in the general reliability of the writers, a refusal to identify inspiration with inerrancy, and a sceptical attitude towards that 'religious-historical' method which would seek to explain some of the leading

New Testament ideas, with obvious consequences for the narrative, by reference to the syncretistic religious tendencies of the age. The article on the Virgin Birth will be found instructive in this connexion. We may note the difference in his valuation of the accounts given in the Third and the First Gospel respectively. 'All things considered,' he says, 'the present writer would not be disposed to attach a great deal of importance to the story in the First Gospel if it stood alone. Its value lies in the fact that in spite of its complete independence of St. Luke's narrative it agrees with it on the fundamental point of the virginal conception of Jesus, and that the story of His birth and infancy is told, so noticeably, from the side of Joseph.' At the same time, Dr. Gore would refuse to regard the question as one to be decided simply on the Biblical evidence. He does not rank tradition with the Bible, but he would insist on the relevance of tradition as bearing witness to the central current of the Church's thought. So he writes: 'The true idea of the Incarnation and the fact of the Virgin Birth appear in early Church history as indiscernible.'

Of Dr. Gore's conception of Inspiration something more must be said, for here, without any doubt, is the point where his influence on Biblical studies has been most far-reaching. His essay on 'The Holy Spirit and Inspiration' in *Lux Mundi* (first edition, 1889) was one of those theological writings which make an end and therefore a beginning. It made an end of the idea that the Anglican High Church movement was committed to the doctrine of Scriptural inerrancy and, in effect, to all the traditional views of authorship, dates, and the like. It broke with that conception of Biblical inspiration and authority which Pusey and Liddon had shared with their Evangelical opponents, which, in essentials, classical Protestantism and the Roman Catholic Church alike affirmed. So it meant the beginning of a new era, not only in the gradual acceptance by the great majority of High Church theologians of the main conclusions emerging from the studies of those who were described as the Higher Critics, but also in a new attitude towards the problems of the meaning of revelation and of authority in religion. It meant a re-orientation of the High Church movement away from the Roman Catholic Church on a matter of great doctrinal importance. What Dr. Gore claimed and claims is that Christianity and Catholicism are not bound up with a belief in Biblical inerrancy. As I understand the Roman Catholic position (and I realize that there are explanations and interpretations of the meaning of inspiration of which we must take

account, as, for instance, with regard to truth in the 'literal sense'), it is expressed in such a statement as that of Dr. Arendzen and Dr. Downey in their article 'Inspiration,' contained in the volume *The Religion of the Scriptures*, namely, that 'inspiration necessarily involves the absolute veracity of every statement of the Bible; for as God wrote it, and God cannot lie, the Bible cannot contain error of any kind.' Now, in Dr. Gore's *Lux Mundi* essay there was not an actual dogmatic denial of inerrancy, but there was a very definite acceptance of the view that the facts as recorded in the historical portions of the Old Testament were not always the facts as they originally happened—that there had taken place an 'unconscious idealizing of history.' Dr. Gore wrote tentatively and cautiously, but the storm which broke made it clear that the significance of what he had said was understood. There could be no clean cut between the Old Testament and the New. Dr. Gore had not made one, but, as a matter of fact, he had directed his attention in this part of the essay mainly to the Old Testament. In his much later work (1924), *The Doctrine of the Infallible Book*, the idea of the inerrancy of the records in any part of the Bible is quite definitely denied: 'There are mistakes in the Gospels and a great number of more or less important discrepancies of detail.' Thus, for him, inspiration is not only a different thing from infallibility, but does not involve infallibility. The Biblical writers were inspired by the Spirit of God; but they were not inerrant.

Next we must take note of his work in Dogmatic Theology. Here his most important contributions are the Bampton Lectures for 1891 on *The Incarnation of the Son of God*; the *Dissertations* of 1895, in which a fuller treatment was given to three subjects connected with the Incarnation; the study of eucharistic doctrine published under the title, *The Body of Christ*, in 1901, a time of acute sacramental controversy in the Church of England; and the famous trilogy, *Belief in God*, *Belief in Christ*, and *The Holy Spirit and the Church*, which belongs to the years 1921-1924. The title of the Bampton gives the key to Dr. Gore's central interest. He is, pre-eminently, the theologian of the Incarnation. In line with this is his doctrine of the Church and of the Sacraments. It is not that he passes over lightly the theology of the Atonement, of the Resurrection, and of the Holy Spirit. But every great religious teacher is inclined to draw his thoughts from and to one centre; and with Dr. Gore that centre is the amazing and adorable act of the Everlasting Son in taking to

Himself human nature. And as to his theology of the Incarnation, the ellipse of his thought revolves round two foci—that personal pre-existence of the divine Son, so clear in the teaching of St. Paul and St. John, which controlled the dogmatic thinking of the great names of the ancient Church, and is the permanent barrier against any substitution of an immanent for an incarnational Christology; and that reality of Christ's manhood which implies for Dr. Gore such a kenotic doctrine as may be expressed in these words from *Belief in Christ*: 'He emptied Himself of divine prerogatives so far as was involved in really becoming man, and growing, feeling, thinking, and suffering as man.'

Let me briefly summarize certain further emphases which arise in connexion with Dr. Gore's Christological teaching. First, for the positive picture of Christ we must always return to the Gospels. Secondly, the decisions of the great Councils on Christology are permanently true and their terminology adequate as expressing and defending the idea of a real incarnation. The long note in *The Holy Spirit and the Church*, in examination of Dr. Mackintosh's criticism of Chalcedon, is very important in this connexion. But, thirdly, the conciliar decisions must be understood in relation to their primary motive, which was negative—to exclude false theories, destructive of a real incarnation. Finally, we must refuse such corollaries drawn from the conciliar decisions as ascribe to the incarnate Son omniscience within the sphere of His mortal life, or would conceive of a juxtaposition in Him of two consciousnesses—one divine, one human.

The more speculative elements in Christology do not attract Dr. Gore. Of such a conjectural theory as that of Dr. Temple that if, *per impossible*, the divine nature could be abstracted from Jesus Christ there would be left—not nothing, but a man, Dr. Gore remarked to the present writer that he became increasingly suspicious of incursions into the unverifiable. This is to be borne in mind in connexion with his eucharistic theology. His doctrine is that of the real presence of Christ in the sacramental species after consecration; the bread and wine become His body and blood. But transubstantiation seems to him unsatisfactory as a theory, in the same sort of way as monophysitism is unsatisfactory in Christology, and as an attempt to define beyond the limits of our powers. It is, in large part, the same motive which is at work in his unwillingness to support extra-liturgical devotions focused upon the reserved sacrament. He dis-

trusts the kind of logic which he thinks he sees at work, and is not convinced by the pragmatic argument.

So we come to the third main activity in Dr. Gore's writings. Biblical expositor and dogmatic theologian, he has also been a many-sided and persistent ecclesiastical controversialist. This he has been because of his deep-rooted belief that those who assent to positive doctrines must be prepared to defend them. So he has fought, openly, tenaciously, with complete lack of bitterness, never, within my knowledge, on any single occasion introducing a personal note, on three great fronts. He has fought for episcopacy and an episcopally-ordained ministry as essential in Church order, with the doctrine of apostolical succession as the theological truth of the matter. His book, *The Church and the Ministry*, is a long defence of this position; his first publication, in 1882, was a critical review of Hatch's Bampton Lectures; his statement at the Cambridge Church Congress of 1910 that 'the Anglican communion would certainly be rent in twain on the day on which any non-episcopally ordained minister was formally allowed within our communion to celebrate the Eucharist' was as inevitable a corollary of his fundamental convictions as it was unquestionably true to the facts of the Anglican situation. He has fought for the standing of the Church of England as a true branch of the Catholic Church against Roman Catholic attacks. If this involved criticism of various Roman Catholic positions, of aspects of Roman Catholic doctrine and cultus, one must allow that any other proceeding would have been quite unreal. Indeed, I would suggest that it was very desirable that one who possessed this background as an Anglican controversialist should have been one of the Anglican participants in the Malines conversations. And, finally, he has entered again and again into controversy with the Modernists on the subject of the Creeds, and of the legitimacy of 'symbolic' assent to the clauses asserting our Lord's birth from a virgin, and His resurrection. Where the Creeds assert the occurrence of historical facts in this world of time and space, there the confession of faith must mean the acceptance of those facts as historical according to the Creeds' meaning. In particular, such acceptance must be required of the ministers of the Church. That is Dr. Gore's position on a subject which may give rise to even more significant discussion in the future than in the past.

It is with an acute sense of how much has been left unsaid that I bring this appreciation of Dr.

Gore to an end. In particular, practically no account has been given of the substance of his moral and social teaching, of which the latest expression appears in his Halley Stewart Lectures, *Christ and Society*. What has been said may, perhaps, contribute something to the understanding of the profound influence which Dr. Gore has exercised and still exercises as theologian, teacher, and—man, within the Church of England and beyond its borders. He is not one of the very

greatest of scholars or of theologians. But theology has been alive in his teaching, and more than any other man of his generation he has made it live for others. On the history of thought within the Church of England during the last forty years no one has set so strong a mark. And of what he has meant in the life of his time there can be no more adequate symbol than that statue of him—the only statue, I imagine, of a living Bishop—which stands before the pro-cathedral in the great city of Birmingham.

Literature.

THE QUESTION OF AUTHORITY.

WE hear laments that few great books are being written in our time. Professor C. J. Cadoux has already produced some valuable studies, and now he has given us a really big work. It is entitled *Catholicism and Christianity* (Allen & Unwin; 2rs. net). The sub-title reveals its aim; it is 'A Vindication of Progressive Protestantism.' This is a learned work, but it is always readable. It is a long argument which, with copious footnotes that attest an extraordinary amount of reading, occupies seven hundred pages; but the reader does not grow weary. It reveals Dr. Cadoux as a sound historian, a most erudite scholar, and a great constructive thinker. He sees both sides but never becomes uncertain. He acknowledges all that is admirable in Catholicism, and all that has been weak in traditional Protestantism; yet he is confident, and makes us confident with him, that the last word is with Protestantism, delivered from its old fetters of scholasticism.

His sober, penetrating criticism of the Catholic view of the seat of authority is, point by point and in its cumulative effect, so devastating that we shall await with the keenest possible interest answers from the Catholic side. Roman views have not been subjected to so annihilating a barrage from the three sides of philosophy, history, and morals since Hase's day. Hase wrote in 1862; Dr. Cadoux, living in a largely new world of thought, gives the old controversy a setting which was not possible for Hase.

The problem of authority in religion is highly complicated. Biblical criticism has cast serious doubt on the old-fashioned simple appeal to Scripture, which indeed was never quite so simple as it

sounded. The Quakers, vastly more influential than their numbers might suggest, compelled men to think of the ultimate authority of 'the inner light.' No one possessed of knowledge can deny in some sense the authority of the Church. How are the three related? We merely say that Dr. Cadoux is the wisest and most knowledgeable guide towards a solution that we have met. We are not indeed certain that we would express everything precisely as he puts it; what we are perfectly sure of is this, we have here a book, a much-needed book, which no one who would have a clear mind on the subject of authority, or on the real nature of Catholic and Protestant claims, can afford to neglect.

The foreword by Dr. J. Vernon Bartlet should be carefully read. It is not only a most helpful exposition of the views of Dr. Cadoux; it is a valuable independent contribution to the subject.

SOULS IN THE MAKING.

Here is a book that should set many ministers thinking and wondering and studying, and perhaps something more. Professor Mackenzie of Nottingham is a devout and earnest soul, very eager to help his fellow-men and women, and very sure that there is in Jesus Christ all that any one of them can need. But for a time he found himself baffled in many instances in all his efforts to get the power of Jesus Christ across to them. He took to a close study of psychology, psycho-analysis, psychotherapy, and the like, and has, as he believes, found the solution of his problem there. Many others think so too. For it seems that a steady stream of all kinds of difficult cases keeps pouring to him; and he is absolutely certain that in case